

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 26, 2009

The Honorable Pat Quinn
Governor
Capitol Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Quinn:

On behalf of the nearly 20,000 manufacturing companies in Illinois, we are writing to urge you to include funding for the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center (IMEC) in the FY 2010 State budget. Without state funds, IMEC will be unable to draw down the full complement of federal dollars being made available to support outreach and services to manufacturers. The state's investment will also ensure that Illinois manufacturers get the hands-on help they need to weather the current recession and succeed in the future.

IMEC is preparing manufacturers to boost productivity, sales, and jobs. Our state is built on a heritage of manufacturing. Yet today, manufacturing is changing at a pace never before seen in this country. To compete and win, manufacturers must reassess their markets, differentiate their products, and provide more value to their customers. Unfortunately, many companies do not have the time or resources to make these improvements alone. They rely on expertise and support from IMEC.

State funds are needed to match available federal funds. Congress has provided funding for the federal Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) since the late 1980's. The funding formula requires MEP centers to produce two dollars of match in order to draw down one dollar from the fed. Without the state's co-investment, MEP centers like IMEC run the risk of not being able to leverage the full amount of federal funding. We need to ensure that federal resources are not left on the table, especially when manufacturers are struggling and in need of assistance.

IMEC produces documented results. The federal government heavily scrutinizes organizations like IMEC to ensure that the program is delivering real results for real companies. Independent surveys validate that the companies assisted by IMEC achieve productivity gains more than four times greater than firms that don't receive similar help—and typically hire workers and invest in facilities when many others are struggling.

IMEC is one of the most successful federal/state/private partnerships in government. At a time when economic recovery, supply chain reliability for consumer and defense products, and global competitiveness are national priorities, we believe that government can and should play a role in creating the conditions necessary for success. There is no better way to accomplish this than to combine our resources at the state, federal, and local levels.

We know well the state's current budget challenges and the hard choices you face. Our encouragement to you is to fund those economic development programs that will stretch the state's limited budget dollars as far as possible. ***Funding IMEC will support Illinois manufacturers while enabling America to regain its competitive advantage.***

Sincerely,



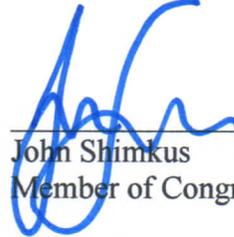
Aaron Schock
Member of Congress



Deborah Halvorson
Member of Congress



Phil Hare
Member of Congress



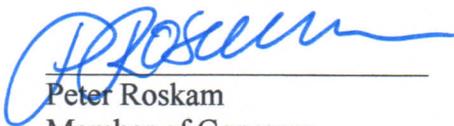
John Shimkus
Member of Congress



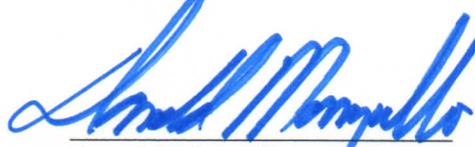
Tim Johnson
Member of Congress



Jerry Costello
Member of Congress



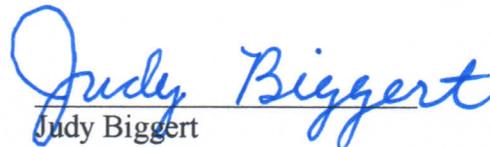
Peter Roskam
Member of Congress



Donald Manzullo
Member of Congress



Mark Kirk
Member of Congress



Judy Biggert
Member of Congress

CC:

Honorable Michael J. Madigan
Honorable John Cullerton
Honorable Tom Cross
Honorable Christine Radogno